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TAGS: PREL PARM MNUC KNNP KN RS

SUBJECT: GOR REACTS TO THE SIXTH ROUND OF SIX-PARTY TALKS

REF: A. MOSCOW 849

¶B. MOSCOW 1100

Classified By: Pol/Min Alice G. Wells. Reasons 1,4 (B/D)

¶1. (C) While press reports had indicated that Deputy Foreign Minister Losyukov, the chief Russian negotiator in the Six Party Talks, had attributed the breakdown in negotiations to the U.S.'s failure to deliver, the GOR officially termed the latest round as "useful." The MFA statement noted the complexity of the talks and remaining disagreements among participants, but concluded that the meetings contributed to a "more objective" understanding of the outstanding issues. To raise the effectiveness of the talks and move quickly to reach the goals stipulated in the February 13 agreement, the MFA called for the adoption of a clear roadmap which sequenced mutually agreed steps.

¶2. (C) Oleg Davydov, MFA Senior Counselor and a participant of the Six-Party Talks, told us that the GOR viewed the March 19 round as typical of the ups and downs that go with dealing with the North Koreans. The immediate key to resuming negotiations is the return of the "frozen" North Korean money. Davydov noted that the DPRK was not interested in the "process" -- the details of how the U.S. might move the money from one bank to another, but in the "result" -- the actual return of the money within 30 days as "promised." Noting that this was an issue between the U.S. Department of Treasury and banking institutions, he said Russia was on the sidelines of the discussion. Davydov expressed optimism that the halt in negotiations was a "pause," not an "impasse," and that all parties would return to the table in mid-April.

¶3. (C) Aleksandr Ignatov, MFA Deputy Director of the ASEAN Department and a participant in the GOR-chaired Fifth Working Group on the Northeast Asia Peace and Security Mechanism, told us that the Russian delegation was surprised at the unexpectedly belligerent behavior of the North in the talks. This stood in contrast to the other five delegations' constructive orientation. The two-hour session disappointed the Russian delegation and convinced Ignatov that the process would be slow and treacherous, with the North extracting a quid pro quo for every concession. Ignatov added that the U.S. and Russia shared the same vision regarding the fifth WG.

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